



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF LOUDOUN
20460 GLEEDSVILLE ROAD
LEESBURG, VA 20175

Policy on Taking a Stand

Engagement with the pressing issues of our community, nation, and world is a tradition of the Unitarian Universalist faith. Our heritage is one of many heroines and heroes who have struggled for justice and freedom.

In furtherance of our faith, UUCL may decide to take a position or a stand on social issues that are consistent with our Church covenant and advance our principles and purposes.

Such a position must address one or more of our seven principles:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Taking a Stand

The Governing Board is the principal policy forming body of the church, and as such has the authority and responsibility to issue policies or take stands on behalf of the congregation. In accordance with our By-Laws, policies approved by the Board are disseminated to UUCL members 14 days prior to going into effect.

In addition to Board-generated policies, any UUCL member in good standing may submit a "Take a Stand" proposal for consideration. Groups of members (including ad hoc or existing committees) may also join together to submit a proposal with more than one sponsor. In these cases, a single point person should be identified as the lead sponsor.

Crafting Proposals

Sponsors shall develop written proposals which include the following information:

1. An overview of the issue and a discussion of any controversy around the position that is being advocated;

2. A clear statement about the stand UUCL would be taking with regards to the issue – including any related actions being advocated;
3. A discussion of how the position upholds one of more of the seven UU principles;
4. Why it is important for UUCL to publically declare such a position at this time;
5. How the sponsor(s) have engaged members of UUCL in discussions(s) about the position
6. The precise language to be used for any public articulation of the position;
7. If applicable, the period of time that UUCL will advocate the position before it expires or is reconsidered - an indefinite period may be proposed;
8. If applicable, any budgetary implications.

Proposals to endorse individual candidates for public office are not eligible for consideration.

Proposal Review

Sponsors should submit the proposal to the Board, which will review it against the following criteria:

1. The proposal advances one or more of the seven UU principles and is not in conflict with any of them.
2. Opposition to the position – whether within the congregation or beyond – has been carefully considered.
3. UUCL members have been provided with adequate, objective information about the proposal.
4. Any risks associated with UUCL taking position of the proposal have been carefully considered and, to the extent possible, adequately addressed.

Based on these criteria, the Board will determine whether to approve the proposal or, in cases where additional analysis is warranted, to send the proposal to the Social Action Coordinating Committee (SACC) for further review and development.

In these cases, the SACC Chair will circulate the proposal to SACC members and place the item for discussion at the committee's upcoming meeting. The SACC may request that additional effort be invested by the sponsor(s) in order to thoroughly address the criteria listed above.

If and when all criteria have been met, the SACC Chair will forward the final proposal to the Board with a recommendation for approval. If the SACC does not approve the proposal, the Chair shall notify the sponsor with a written explanation for disapproval. This same information shall be included in the next monthly SACC report to the UUCL Governing Board.

Proposal Approval

Once approved by the Board, proposals will be disseminated to the membership for review and comment fourteen (14) days prior to going into effect.